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"Buck Private" McCollum

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RHYMES OF A LOST BATTALION DOUGHBOY

By

"Buck Private" McCollum

Sketches

By

Franklin Sly-

Price, Fifty Cents

SOMME

ITALIAN
FRONT

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L. C. McCOLLUM

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One Hundred Sixty-fifth Thousand

A Tribute

*Written Expressly for This Publication by Col. C. W.
Whittlesey, Commander of "The Lost Battalion"*

As one of the members of a regiment that fought in France, the memories that are most vivid with me, now that two years have gone since the war has ended, are the memories of the nights and days when the simple unknown soldiers of the regiment showed their fineness under trial. In a forest in northeastern France in a cold and damp October, without rations, without surgical attention, cut off, as they supposed, from the notice of their fellow men, they gave to the day's hardships and duties a courage and plain human kindness that will always make one proud of the record of the American soldier. Such achievements are not attributable to any officer or group of officers or leaders. They arise from brave men working unselfishly together with faith in the cause which they serve. When an individual shows courage under stress, we feel a thrill at his achievement, but when a group of men flash out in the splendor of manliness we feel a lasting glow that is both pride and renewed faith in our fellow men. And as a member of such a regiment, for which I feel deep affection, I feel a bond of understanding and fellowship for the American soldier in every place and time, doing his job simply and finely, asking neither sympathy nor praise. May the armistice be lasting, and these great qualities find their true place in Peace.

November 11, 1920.

Charles Whittlesey



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"Up There"

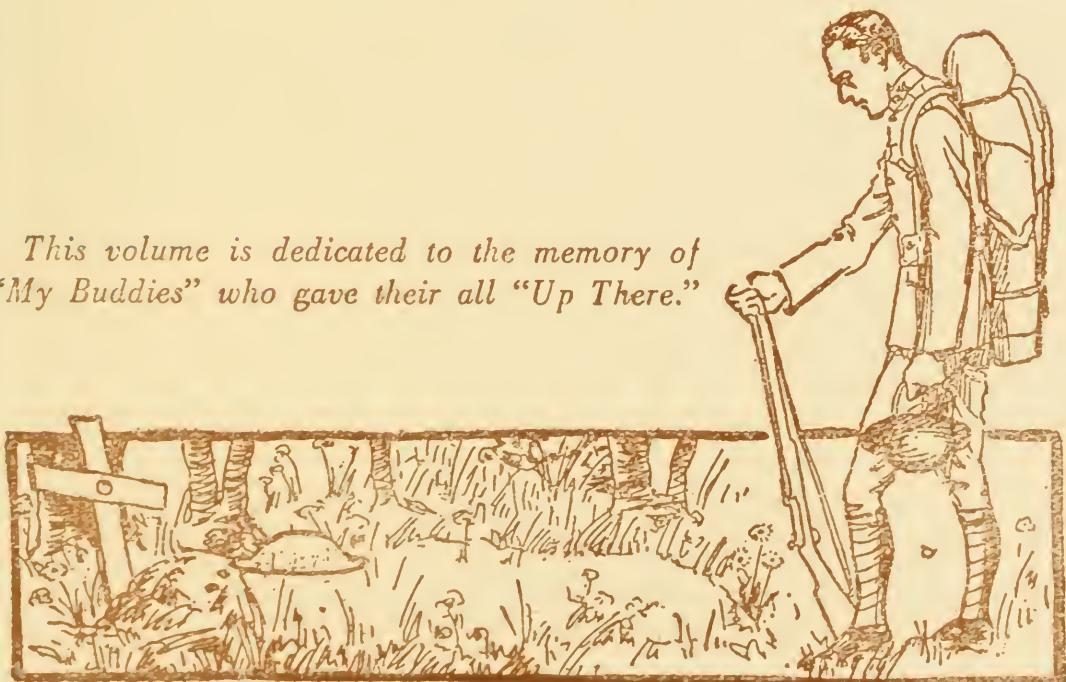
"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

Perhaps those two short words,
Don't sound like much to you;
But they are the entire volume
Of what we have been thru.

They tell of Chateau-Thierry and the Vesle,
And many a brave and daring tale
Of the Argonne, that terrible hell;
Where so many of our brave comrades fell.

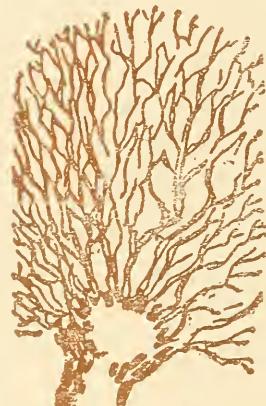
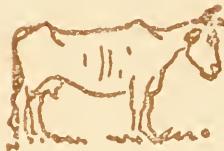
They fell for a cause that was just and true,
To them an undying tribute is due,
May God rest their souls is our silent prayer,
For those who gave their all—"Up There."

*This volume is dedicated to the memory of
"My Buddies" who gave their all "Up There."*



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Bully Beef



I love my Canned Bill, I never knew,
How good that stuff could taste in stew,
I love it hot, I love it cold,
Corn Willie never will grow old.

If you walk into the kitchen,
When thru your morning's drill,
You could bet your old "Tin Derby,"
There you'd meet your friend "Corn Bill."

It's the thing that licked the Kaiser,
In that land across the sea,
And it drove away our troubles,
As we fought for Liberty.

They called it iron-rations,
And we packed the stuff for miles,
It was always worth the effort,
As it filled our face with smiles.

He fought thru all the battles,
The same as you and me,
And I don't see what ever keeps them,
From giving Bill a D. S. C.

Killed in Action

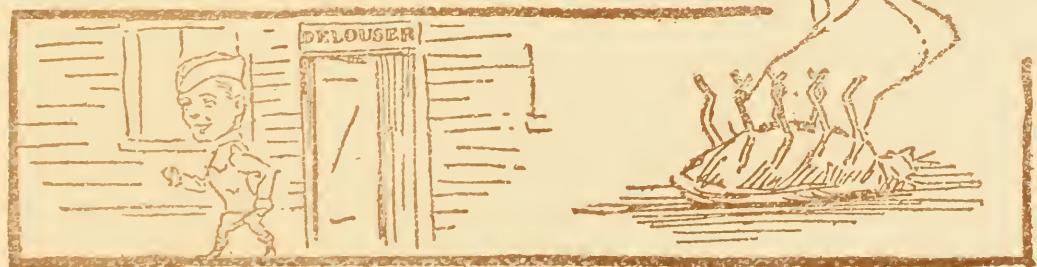
"Rhymes
of a
*Lost Battalion
Doughboy*"

"Killed in action," so they say,
Poor little fellow had lost his way,
In Argonne Woods and up on the Vesle,
He dug like fury and crawled like a snail.

My billet was small, but he didn't care,
He'd dig himself in, and stay right there,
Yet he'd make things snappy while "diggin' in,"
For he was plumb full of hell and fought to win.

Tho small of stature, he was full of fight,
And went "Over the Top" most every night,
Now all the boys knew him, up on the line,
As he kept them company all the time.

He "fell in action," game to the last,
As thru our delouser the "wee fellow" passed,
"Good-bye little cootie," we must leave you in
France,
We "killed you in action"—and were glad of the
chance.



Rain! Rain! Rain!



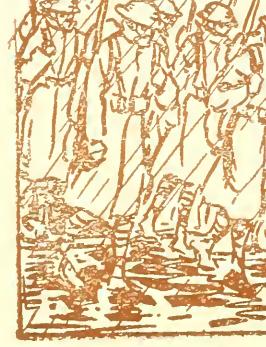
Ever since I landed here,
Things have looked so dull and drear,
Wonder when I'll smile again,
Wonder why there's so much rain?



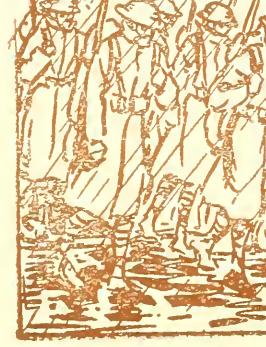
My face and hands are badly peeled,
Practicing "As Skirmishers" in sodden fields,
Body aches from chills and pains,
An' still it rains, and rains, and rains.



Tomorrow we'll be on our way,
To "The Front" I hear them say,
Tonight we load upon the trains,
Wonder why it rains and rains?



The guy who wrote 'bout Sunny France,
Must have been in an awful trance,
Wish the ol' sun would come peepin' thru,
Perhaps things wouldn't look so blue.



Clouds a skootin' overhead,
I've hiked in the rain 'till I'm almost dead;
Damn—but I'm wet clear thru to the skin,
Wonder when we're "Goin' In"?



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

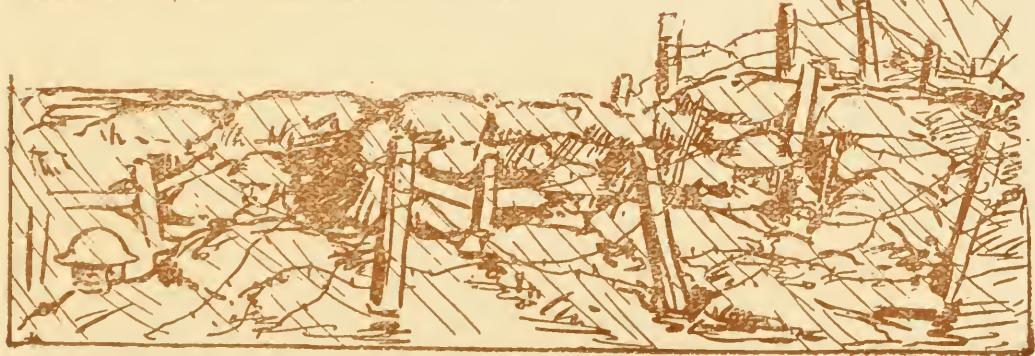
Earth seems to be in a quivering fright,
Wonder how it'd seem to be home tonight?
Never thot I'd be "Over Here,"
Gee, but this rain makes a fellow feel queer.

Been in the lines near thirty days,
Know I'm changed in lots of ways;
Now I know why I had that trainin'
Wonder if it's ever gonna stop rainin'?

Got relieved from the lines last night,
Gee, but this beard of mine's a fright,
Must 'ave hiked a thousand kilos or more.
Damn this rain it's makin' me sore.

Been in the lines since early September,
An' here it is 'way up in November,
But now we got 'em on the run,
Wonder if this rain is rainin' for fun?

Boys ain't talkin' much today,
What they're thinkin' no one can say;
We just got the news that the war is done.
Must be right 'cause there's the sun.



"Gassed"



I've gone all day in a sort of a daze,
An' felt the horror of death,
I don't mind the fight 'cause I know I'm right,
But I'm worried about my breath.

It feels like a ball of red-hot fire,
Turned loose from hell's own door,
An' there seems to be no ease for me,
It's hurting me more and more.

I can feel myself go crumbling,
And fall in a sudden heap,
Then slowly the truth dawns on me,
I was gassed last night in my sleep.

The doctor says I'll pull thru all right,
And am good for a few more years,
But I'm thinking of my dear old mother,
And I just can't keep back the tears.

I've paid the debt that manhood brings,
To make an ideal stand true,
And if, perhaps, I've forgot how to smile,
Remember, it was all for you.

Oh, Boy!

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

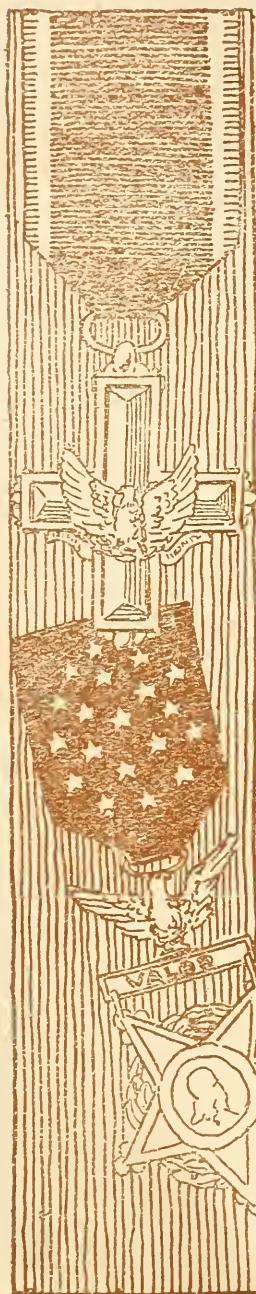
Dressed again in your civies,
And strolling down the street,
Some day a former officer,
You will surely meet.

You will snap up to attention,
As you've always done before,
Only to find upon inspection
It's the officer you abhor.

Then your thots will quickly wander,
'Way back to "Rainy France,"
And you'll get the inspiration,
That at last here is your chance.

So you'll bring your hand up smartly,
'Till it's somewhere near your nose,
And your face will light up with a smile of joy,
As you say to yourself, "Here Goes!"





The Medal

It is not a bit of bronze and metal,
That tells the time-worn tale,
Of some act of heroism,
Where the bullets whine and wail.

Nor is the colored ribbon,
Pinned on some strutting chest,
A truthful indicator,
Of the man who fought the best.

Nor do gold stripes upon the arm,
Always tell the story,
Of men who have seen action,
Or fought their way to glory.

Those are outward indications,
Made by the hand of man,
The way they're sometimes passed about,
Is quite hard to understand.

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

They'll tarnish with the weather,
In the plush or on the shelf,
For the real and lasting medal,
Is the soul within yourself.

If you did your best when called upon,
In the air or gutted shell-hole,
You've got some real satisfaction,
Buried deep within your soul.

No bit of bronze or ribbon bright,
Or words of praise high spoken,
Can change the thots that lie within,
As they are the real true token.

They'll tell the tale as long as you live,
And the truth of how you fought,
If you played the game like a man, my friend,
You've the medal, that can't be bought.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Visions

In early morn when day is born,
Night shadows start to fade,
I gaze upon a land shell-torn,
That war alone has made.
And as the mist begins to lift,
Dim lines of a home I see,
And by the fates' sardonic twist,
There comes a vision to me.

Instead of walls which barely stand,
Against skylines so drear,
Quaint cozy rooms I see instead,
And all that they hold dear.
As plainly tho 'tis painted there,
A happy family I see,
Gathered 'round the glowing fireside,
And a child's on a fond father's knee.

He's telling oft told tales of old,
Their childish love to endear,
'Tis some wondrous fairyland picture he paints,
With a master's stroke that is clear.



Then comes the end of this simple tale,
 'Tis awarded with cries of delight,
Lovelight glows in their trusting eyes;
 As in turn they kiss him good night.

Off to bed they go a-romping,
 Then climb up some queer turning stairs,
By a crude old-fashioned home-made bed,
 They kneel to say their prayers.
"Bless mama, and papa, and give
 Peace on Earth, good will to men."
Then as the mother tucks them in,
 One shyly whispers, "Amen."

But now the vision is fading,
 And again by the will of fate,
From behind barren walls comes a war-dog,
 And all thots of love go to hate.
From my right comes the pop of a "Browning,"
 Which makes my blood run chill;
My Vision's gone—I stand alone,
 My business here is to kill.



The Pirate Gun



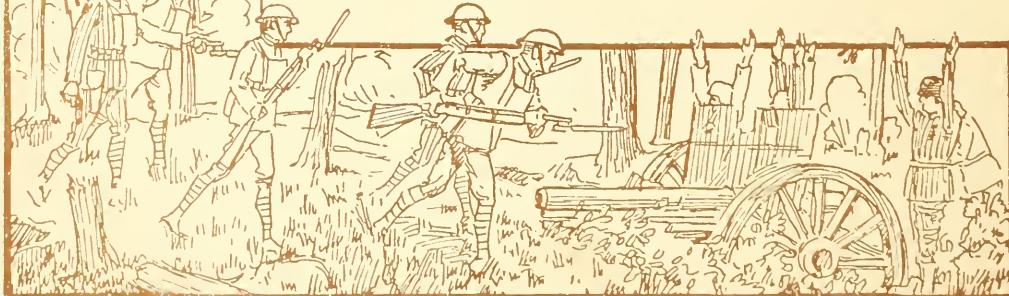
Listen to the tale of the Pirate Gun,
That kept on firing when the war was done;
'Twas up near Stonney, back of Raucort,
Where battles were long and rations short.

'Twas Armistice night, and we'd hunted all day,
For a place to sleep in the "Frogs" dry hay.
When a Pirate Gun's shell screeched over the hill,
We hurriedly scattered and "dug in" with a will.

Through the cold wet night, 'neath a mud cressed
knoll,
We shivered and shook as we lay in our hole,
The Captain looked worried, things didn't seem
right,
And he cussed with the rest as we waited all night.

He was mad as a hornet when we started the hunt,
For the crazy gun that had pulled that stunt;
And after we'd hunted all day in vain,
Everyone was cussing that gun and the rain.

When "Bang!" came a shot from right under our
nose,
And there lay the "Pirate Gun" fully exposed,
With cries of rage we closed in on the Hun,
And that was the end of the "Pirate Gun."



The Buck

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

I'm a lucky son-of-a-gun,
I'm the guy that had the fun,
My clothes were never spick and span,
I was just "Plain Buck"—"The Fightin' Man."

I should worry if my feet were bare,
Or cooties made their nests in my hair,
Or the Captain cussed me every day,
I went right along in my own plain way.

I fought the battle of "Ole' Vin Roo"—
And was in on the drive on "Army Stew,"
No hampered looeys ever broke my heart,
I just stalled along and did my part.

Whenever the boys felt homesick and blue,
They'd call on me for a story or two,
I made them laugh with my song and dance,
And helped put some sunshine in "Rainy Ole'
France."

I never craved for rank or fame,
I always took things just as they came,
And I earned a title that will always stick;
"Plain Ole' Buck,"—"Champion Gold Brick."





Those Who Wait

*Who knows the thots of mothers who wait,
Whether in grandeur, or lowly state,
Who knows the sacrifice of those who give
Their all, their sons, that we might live?*

The days are long as I sit here and knit,
Fashioning these socks for him—bit by bit;
My thots are ever one constant prayer,
For my boy, my all, who's "Over There."

The long endless nights bring no rest,
My baby again nestles close to my breast,
The sense of his touch brings sweet poignant joy,
"May God watch o'er him, my own—my boy."

He was only a lad, but then he would go,
I'm heartsick, dear Lord, but proud of him tho,
Our country needed him, he heard the call,
Light's gone from life, for he is my all.



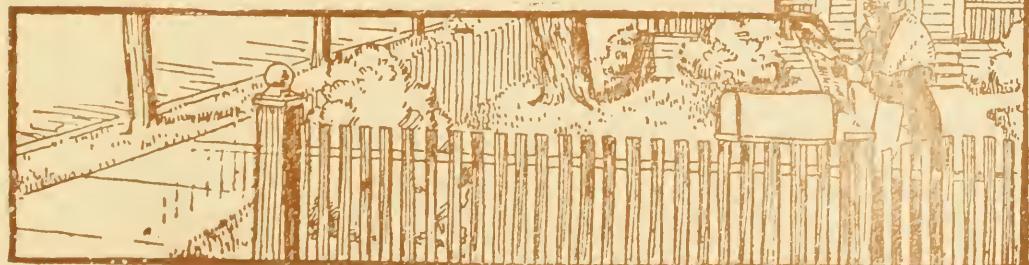
"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

Watching the mail box here by the gate,
For I know not what, I wait—and wait—
When the postman stops, my heart stands still,
My body's a-sweat with a fevered chill.

"Our boys have gained and advanced to the
Meuse,
And will advance beyond," so reads the news;
In glowing terms they praise our men,
But I'm gripped in the throes of that fear again.

I wait 'till the last, before I look at the list,
The words go blur, as my eyes grow mist,
I'm stifling and choked with that nameless dread,
Of seeing his name among the dead.

*Who knows the thots of mothers who wait,
Whether in grandeur, or lowly state,
Who knows the sacrifice of those who give
Their all, their sons, that we might live?*



My Pals



Of three Pals of mine I would tell,
And how they helped me live thru hell,
First, there's "Billy," my old gas mask,
And for a better Pal you could never ask.

The first time I used him (well, I remember),
Was up in the "Argonne," late in September;
Gas alarm had sounded, it brought a cold chill,
But with "Billy" on, it changed to a thrill.

I pictured myself laying there dead,
But grabbed and put on old "Billy" instead,
Three hours we lived thru that hellish gas,
Since then he's my pal, first and last.

Now, next comes "Jim," my old "diggin' in"
tool,

And he was more than a pal, except to a fool.
He'd helped me "dig in" both night and day,
And made me war wise in his own quiet way.

We dug thru rock and sometimes ground,
Then slept the sleep of a dog-tired hound,
And thru any battle of raging hell,
He was my Pal, and served me well.



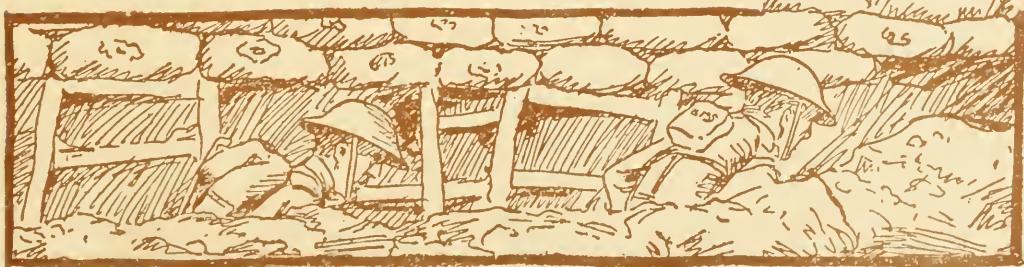
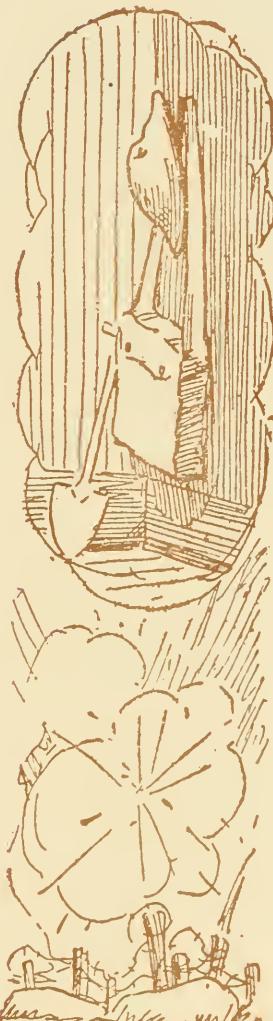
Last, but not least, comes "Jack," that boy,
Who was my one comfort and eternal joy.
Only a "tin derby" he's often been called,
But never yet has old Jack stalled.

I've used him as a writing pad,
And as a seat he's not half bad;
Used him to pound those queer tent poles,
And for protection in many shell holes.

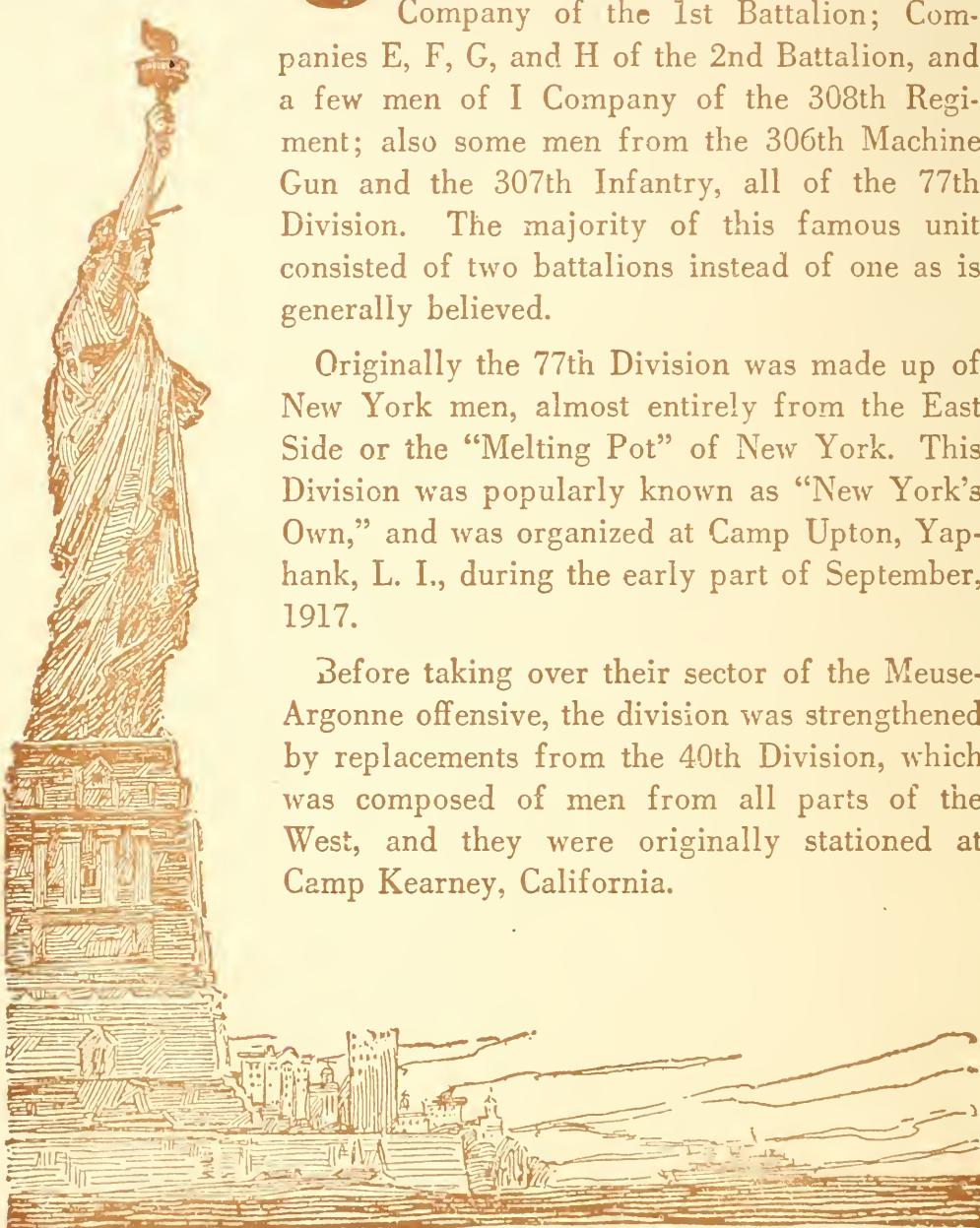
Battered and scarred, shelltorn and marred,
Beyond all recognition was he,
For turning the "Boches" shrapnel,
Had been his real specialty.

He nestled close to my kinky head,
And kept me from numbering amongst the dead.
That's "Jack's" story, and I'll own,
He was more to me than some king's throne.

So, if perhaps they seem a bit proud,
Remember they are one of my fighting crowd,
And now they're taking a well earned rest,
In the corner of the room that I love best.



History of the Lost Battalion



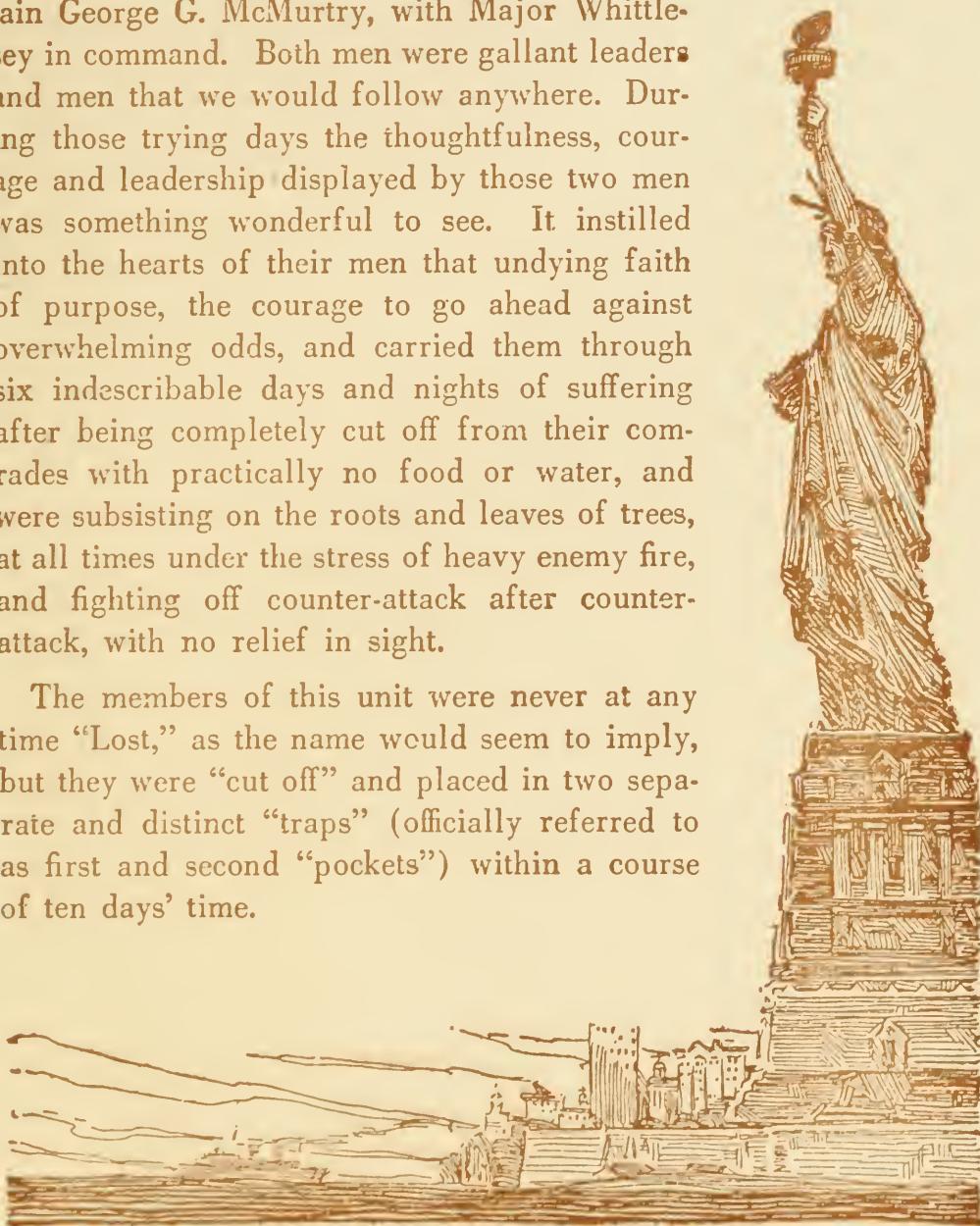
THE "LOST BATTALION" consisted of Companies A, B, C, and a part of D Company of the 1st Battalion; Companies E, F, G, and H of the 2nd Battalion, and a few men of I Company of the 308th Regiment; also some men from the 306th Machine Gun and the 307th Infantry, all of the 77th Division. The majority of this famous unit consisted of two battalions instead of one as is generally believed.

Originally the 77th Division was made up of New York men, almost entirely from the East Side or the "Melting Pot" of New York. This Division was popularly known as "New York's Own," and was organized at Camp Upton, Yaphank, L. I., during the early part of September, 1917.

Before taking over their sector of the Meuse-Argonne offensive, the division was strengthened by replacements from the 40th Division, which was composed of men from all parts of the West, and they were originally stationed at Camp Kearney, California.

The 1st Battalion was led by Major Charles W. Whittlesey, and the 2nd Battalion by Captain George G. McMurtry, with Major Whittlesey in command. Both men were gallant leaders and men that we would follow anywhere. During those trying days the thoughtfulness, courage and leadership displayed by those two men was something wonderful to see. It instilled into the hearts of their men that undying faith of purpose, the courage to go ahead against overwhelming odds, and carried them through six indescribable days and nights of suffering after being completely cut off from their comrades with practically no food or water, and were subsisting on the roots and leaves of trees, at all times under the stress of heavy enemy fire, and fighting off counter-attack after counter-attack, with no relief in sight.

The members of this unit were never at any time "Lost," as the name would seem to imply, but they were "cut off" and placed in two separate and distinct "traps" (officially referred to as first and second "pockets") within a course of ten days' time.

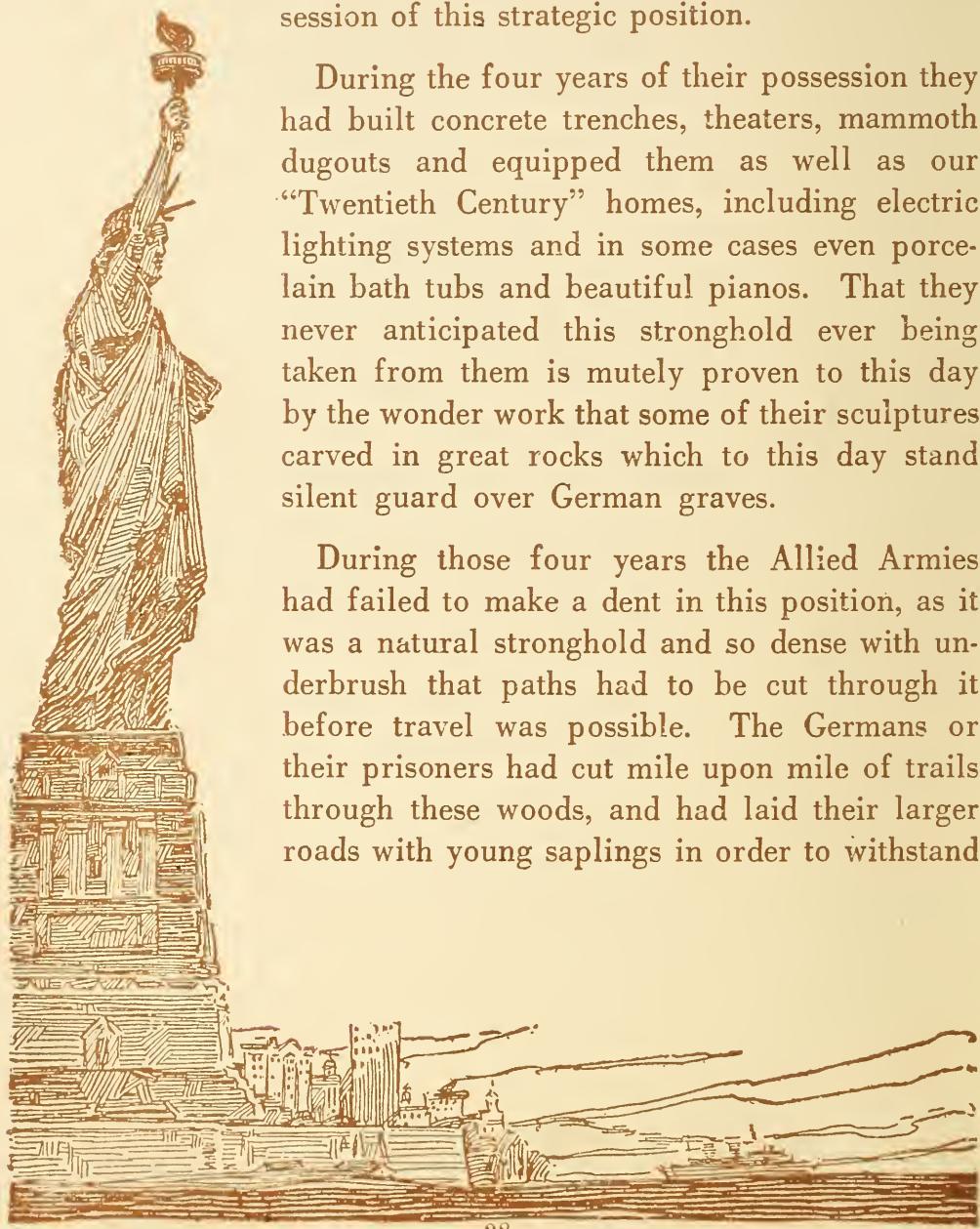


*"Rhymes
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The Argonne Forest was considered impregnable and the Germans felt secure in their possession of this strategic position.

During the four years of their possession they had built concrete trenches, theaters, mammoth dugouts and equipped them as well as our "Twentieth Century" homes, including electric lighting systems and in some cases even porcelain bath tubs and beautiful pianos. That they never anticipated this stronghold ever being taken from them is mutely proven to this day by the wonder work that some of their sculptures carved in great rocks which to this day stand silent guard over German graves.

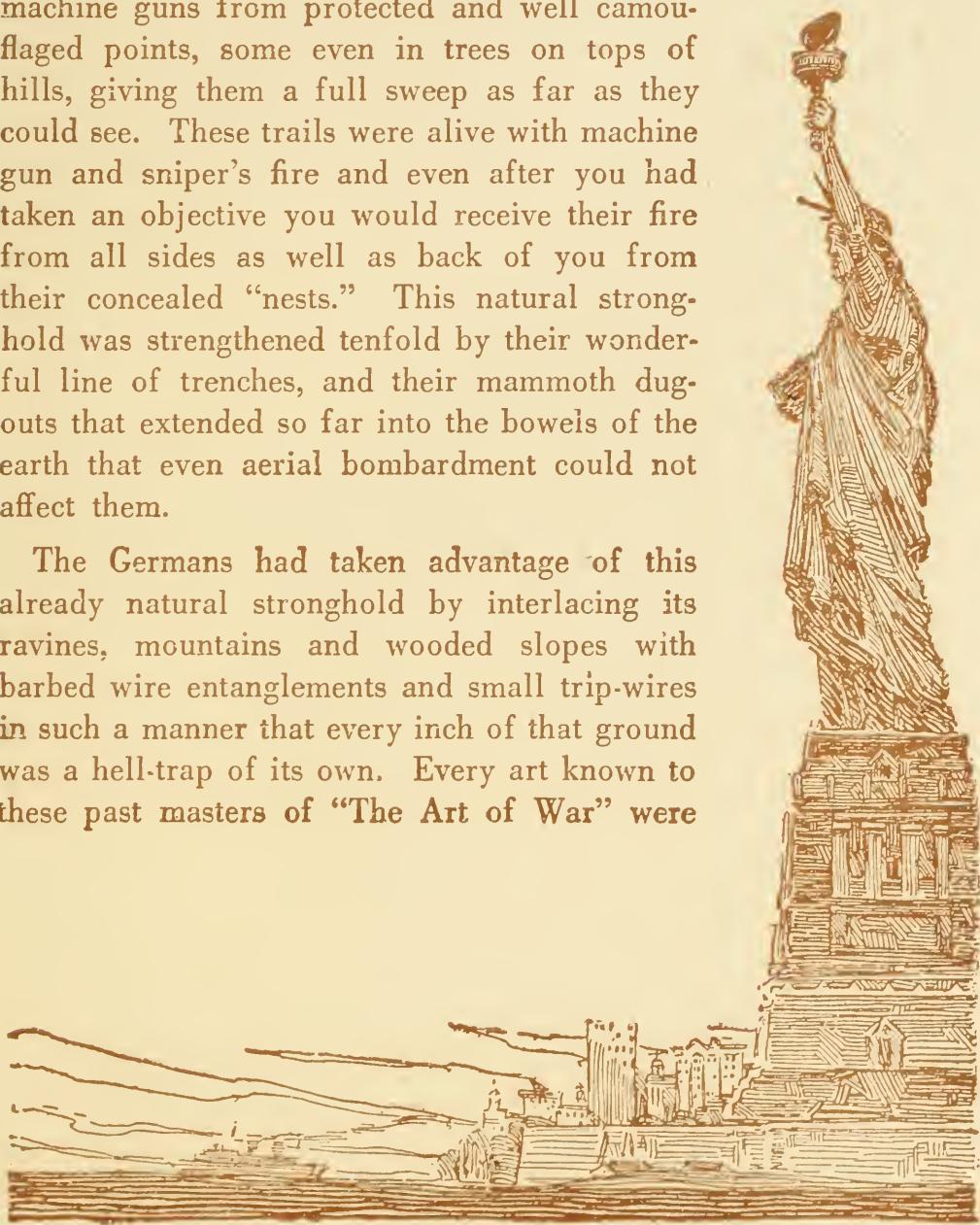
During those four years the Allied Armies had failed to make a dent in this position, as it was a natural stronghold and so dense with underbrush that paths had to be cut through it before travel was possible. The Germans or their prisoners had cut mile upon mile of trails through these woods, and had laid their larger roads with young saplings in order to withstand



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the travel of their heavier vehicles and dogs of war. These positions were fully covered by machine guns from protected and well camouflaged points, some even in trees on tops of hills, giving them a full sweep as far as they could see. These trails were alive with machine gun and sniper's fire and even after you had taken an objective you would receive their fire from all sides as well as back of you from their concealed "nests." This natural stronghold was strengthened tenfold by their wonderful line of trenches, and their mammoth dug-outs that extended so far into the bowels of the earth that even aerial bombardment could not affect them.

The Germans had taken advantage of this already natural stronghold by interlacing its ravines, mountains and wooded slopes with barbed wire entanglements and small trip-wires in such a manner that every inch of that ground was a hell-trap of its own. Every art known to these past masters of "The Art of War" were



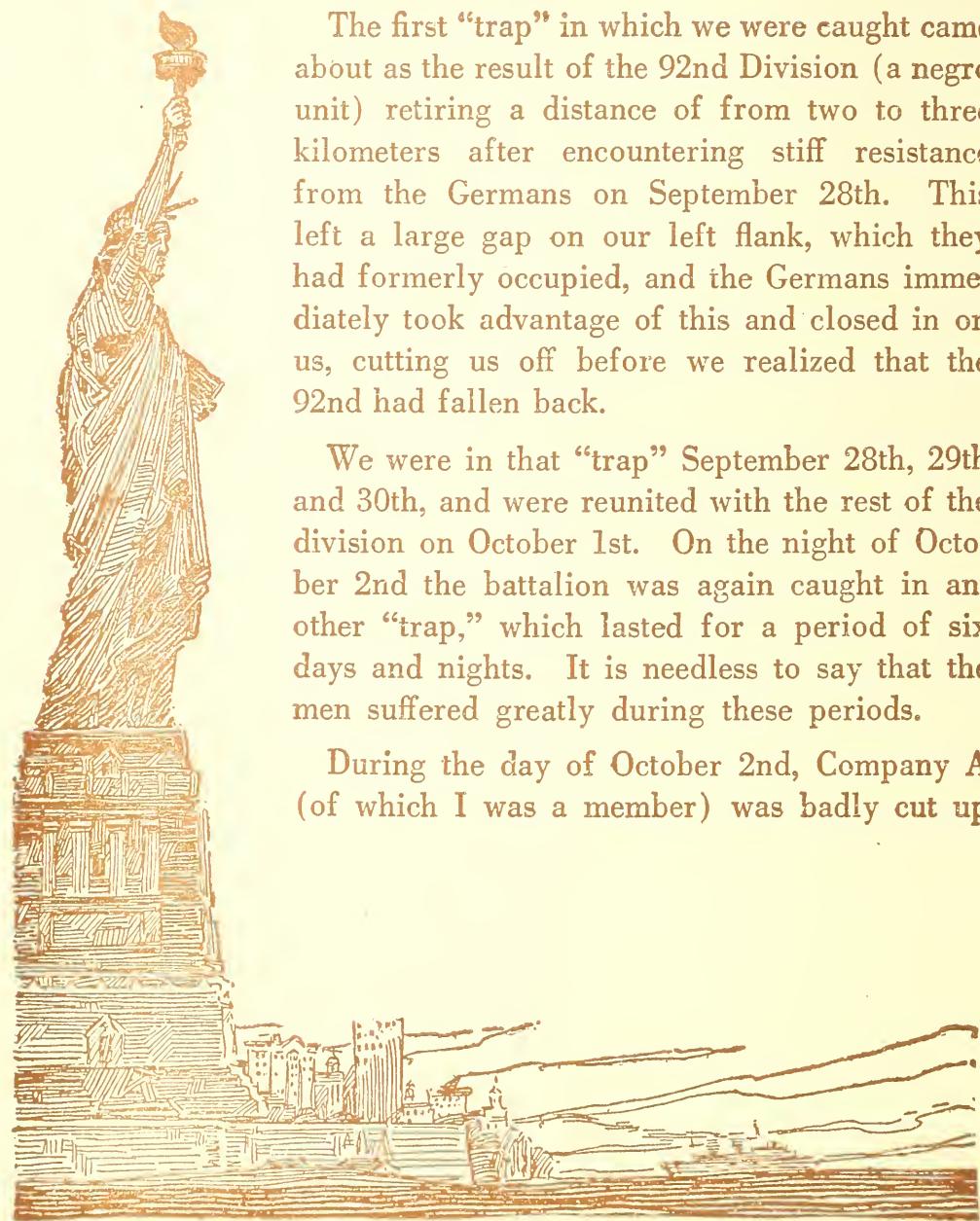
*"Rhymes
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brought into play to make this one point in vulnerable.

The first "trap" in which we were caught came about as the result of the 92nd Division (a negro unit) retiring a distance of from two to three kilometers after encountering stiff resistance from the Germans on September 28th. This left a large gap on our left flank, which they had formerly occupied, and the Germans immediately took advantage of this and closed in on us, cutting us off before we realized that the 92nd had fallen back.

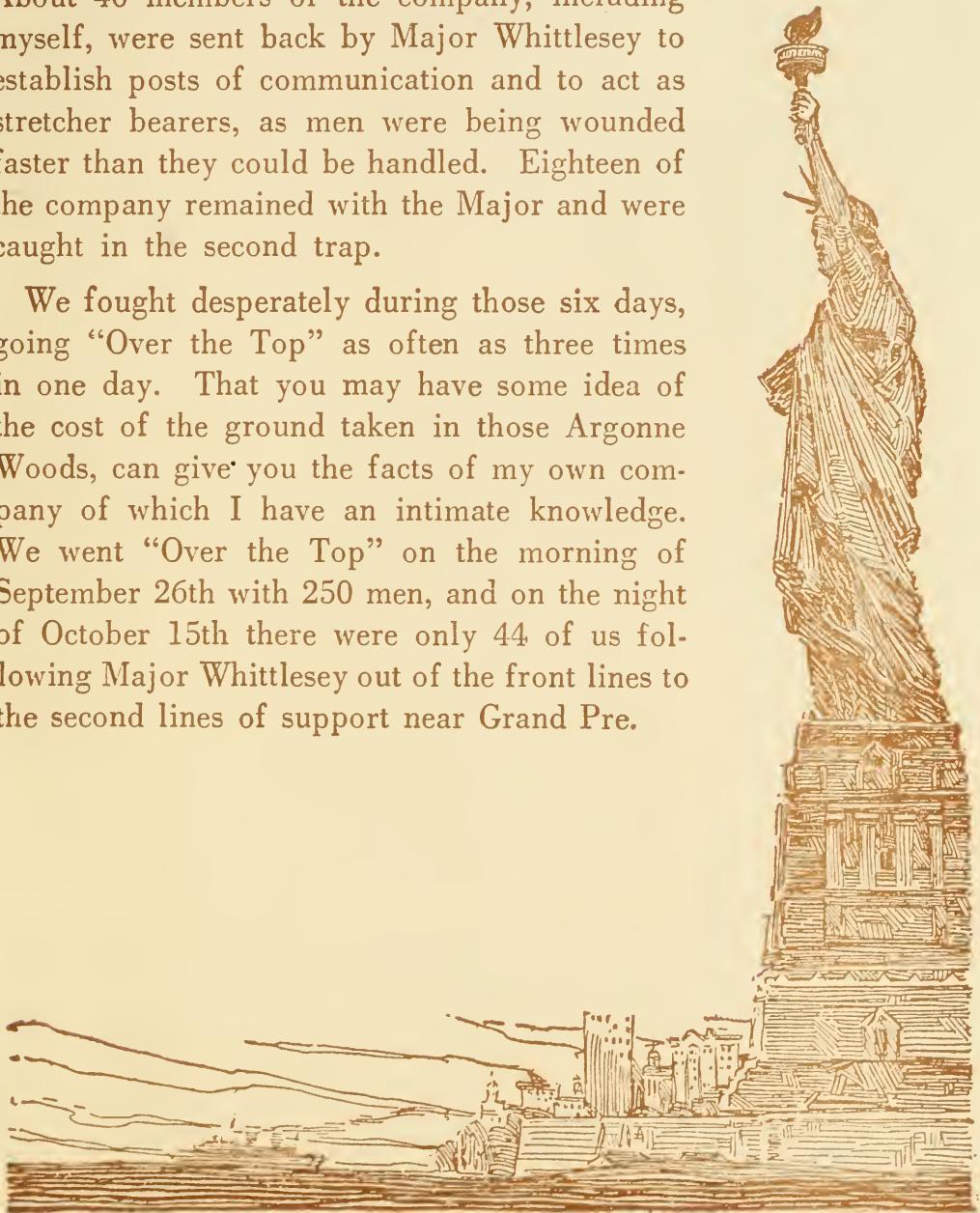
We were in that "trap" September 28th, 29th and 30th, and were reunited with the rest of the division on October 1st. On the night of October 2nd the battalion was again caught in another "trap," which lasted for a period of six days and nights. It is needless to say that the men suffered greatly during these periods.

During the day of October 2nd, Company A (of which I was a member) was badly cut up



while taking a small hill, and during the attack we lost 90 men in less than 30 minutes' fighting. About 40 members of the company, including myself, were sent back by Major Whittlesey to establish posts of communication and to act as stretcher bearers, as men were being wounded faster than they could be handled. Eighteen of the company remained with the Major and were caught in the second trap.

We fought desperately during those six days, going "Over the Top" as often as three times in one day. That you may have some idea of the cost of the ground taken in those Argonne Woods, can give you the facts of my own company of which I have an intimate knowledge. We went "Over the Top" on the morning of September 26th with 250 men, and on the night of October 15th there were only 44 of us following Major Whittlesey out of the front lines to the second lines of support near Grand Pre.





The Fight of the Lost Battalion

Back of Florent, in the Argonne Forest,
Were gathered a handful of men,
Waiting the word to "go in" again;
To come out—God alone knew when.

East met West in those few short hours,
And were drawn together as one,
As brother to brother, and man to man,
They met to suppress the Hun.

And each of them were thinking thots,
That come to but very few men,
For on the 'morrow they'd go 'Over the Top,'
Some never to come back again.

The air and trees were full of sounds,
As we started "in" that night,
You could hear the dull thud of feet on the
ground,
As we went marching towards the fight.

To an open space in the road we came,
And God! what a sight to see;—
The skyline was one red flame,
'Twas our barrage for Democracy.



Sh-h! Hush! Make no noise,
As we're "Going In" real soon,
And you could almost hear the heartbeats,
As we crept in platoon by platoon.

Soon we were in our places,
And we breathed a silent prayer,
As we waited, waited and waited—
Through an endless night "Up There."

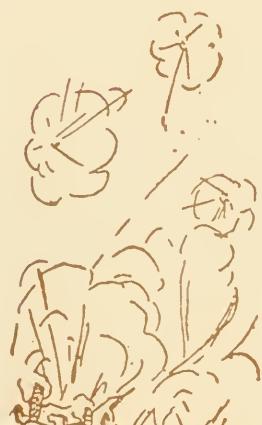
At eleven P. M. on that eventful night,
Our barrage opened up with a flare;
The earth it trembled and shook in fright,
And death just leaped through the air.

God! how the minutes dragged,
You'd think each one was a day,
As we lay there waiting in the cold,
For "Zero Hour" and break of day.

Finally five-thirty, the "Zero Hour" came,
And the word passed down the line,
Go "Over the Top," and "Play the Game,"
And break their damn "Kremhilde lines."



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*



What did we find when finally "On Top"
In that waste called "No Man's Land"?
An ocean of wire in the mist and the fog,
Placed there by the devil's hand.

All day long we pushed them back,
By night we'd their second line trench,
Then we "dug in," and waited for him,
By morn, with the rain we were drenched.

The men were gaunt with hunger,
For what food we had was gone,
And there was the "Boche" ahead of us,
But we pushed on, and on and on!

Were you ever out on the battlefields,
With the dead just stacked all around,
The earth in a tremble from fear and fright,
Of the blood on its sacred ground?

While comrades you loved as brothers and more,
Lay wounded, and moaning in pain,
In your heart a gnawing emptiness—
Was that costly price worth the gain?

Well, for three days we went, till our strength
was spent,
'Midst sights too terrible to tell,
By the time we landed in a trap that night,
I can tell you, we'd all seen hell.

Exhausted from fighting and dead for sleep,
We dug ourselves in for the night;
And as we lay there 'neath the shell-split air
We felt 'twas the end of our fight.

At break of dawn the Boche closed in,
We met him face to face—
And many there were who fell that day,
But night found us still in our place.



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"



For three long days we fought in that trap,
In mud clear up to our knees,
Sleepless, hungry, dying from thirst,
'Neath those splintered Argonne trees.

All hopes gone, our hearts in despair,
When a whisper came down the line,
At last the longed-for relief had arrived,
God knows it came just in time.

We went at the food like a pack of wolves,
That had starved the whole winter through,
And between the munching of bites you'd hear
Mumbled prayers, and curses, too.

No one could picture, try as they might,
The horror and hell of it all,
Our company lost ninety men before night,
It seemed to matter as nothing at all.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

But on and on we carried the fight,
And we crushed the best they had,
We gained our objective, were trapped again,
Then we went mad—fighting mad.

On the side of a cliff two hundred feet high,
We dug in like so many moles,
And death was the penalty that you paid,
Should you stick your head from those holes.

Did you ever lay out in the cold all night,
When the frost just creeps through the air,
When death and misery stalks the night,
Like a giant bat of despair?

If you have, perhaps you can sense,
Of the things I'm trying to tell,
And why every man who came out alive,
Could say that he'd lived through hell.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*



Fighting all day, holding out by pure grit,
And fighting at night by the flare,
The suffering we bore can never be told,
Of those six days and nights spent there.

Death thinned our ranks, took tenfold her toll,
 Of our buddies, your brothers and sons,
But before they went, tho their strength was
 spent,
They took their share of Huns.

Relief came at last as it always does,
When you're backed by red-blooded men,
But we were so weak, so many were gone,
Nothing mattered at all by then.

We stumbled out more dead than alive,
To food, shelter and rest,
While tender hands cared for those,
Who had passed to eternal rest.

Countless questions you will ask,
About that terrible war,
“Our Company went in two-fifty strong—
And came out with but forty and four.”

"Mother"

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

At the close of a spring day in Sable,
I sat in my room alone,
The sun was slowly sinking
And my thots turned back to home.

Thots of my dear old mother,
And how much was hers to bear;
Then in fancy I could see her
In the old familiar chair.

Always thinking of me,
And always praying, too;
Slowly, the truth dawned on me,
Of how much she'd been thru.

Of the long, endless nights of waiting,
And those anxious days of pain;
Wishing, hoping, praying,
That I might return again.



The Flare!

You who know electric lights,
In cities grand and fair,
Have never felt the fear of night,
Unless you've seen the Flare!

You're all secure altho obscure,
And will never know the fright,
That can be brought upon you,
By the Flare when it's a-light.

Your heart is all a-jump
And your nerves are all a-chill,
When you start to go a-raidin',
On a night that's dark and still.

You daren't make a whisper,
And you daren't make a sound,
As you go a-sneakin', creepin',
O'er the cold wet ground.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Crawling o'er the gutted earth,
In "No Man's Land" o'er there,
The thing you're most a-feared of,
Is Jerries' blue-white Flare!

For when he shoots the star-shells,
Into the dark drear night,
You're a mark for sniper's shooting,
And you're filled with fear and fright.

But just you lay stock-still,
As tho you're almost dead,
And he's apt to pass you up,
For some limb or tree instead.

Then you'll see him start a-shootin',
Rockets green and red,
They're his artillery signals,
For his guns which must be fed.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*



You break into a cold wet sweat,
As you cut your way thru wire,
You want to even up a score,
And your heart is all a-fire.

So thru the night that's sometime dim,
And sometime lit by flare,
You crawl and creep as thru an age,
An' softly swear and swear!

And just as dawn is breaking,
In a fever tinted light,
You slowly come a-creepin' in,
With two you got that night.

You're bewildered and bemuddled,
To know that you learned out there,
That the thing that put fear into you,
Was the light of a blue-white Flare.

The Debt

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

My Pals are all around me,
It seems like a horrible dream,
But there goes my "Buddie" damn bad hit,
And I go mad when I hear his scream.

My blood boils up in red, red rage,
And I lose the last of my will;
I'm turned to beast and mad man,
And my cry is to kill—to kill!

I rage and mutter all the night,
And wait for the break of day;
For my mind is mad with that one thot,
They must re-pay!—re-pay!

* * * *

You're gone, so why should I lie,
And say that life's worth while,
When gladly I'd join you where you are,
Just to see once again your smile.

I'll try my best to square the debt,
But, Pal, it can never be done,
So may you rest in peace o'er here,
'Neath the new-made cross that you've won.



Treasures



Treasures in bits of papers,
Treasures in mines of gold,
Treasures in age seared relics,
And in paintings worn and old.

Each to his way of thinking,
Has a treasure in his grasp,
Mine came from the heart of a rough-neck,
And lay in a simple hand-clasp.

'Twas in the lines in the heat of a fight,
And the devil was our host,
He showed us all his tricks and stunts,
As we lay in a stranded outpost.

Without water, food or shelter,
We had lain there for days,
Exhausted and slowly dying,
And our eyes were beginning to glaze.

Our instructions were to hold that post,
Against any odds that might come,
And we were sticking it out alone,
I and my Dago chum.



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

Just a bit of so-called Wop,
Was this boy along with me,
But fighting just as hard as I,
Who was born of Liberty.

It was, "Whata-da-hell, let 'em a-come,
We fight 'em-a hard, you and I,
Whatsa the diff'? It's-a all for da cause,
And somatime we moosta die.

"I got-a da sweet leetle wife,
That's-a wait at home for me,
Deesa a war she's a tough-a game,
But we gotta have Liberty."

Then Tony told me his story,
As we lay in post number four,
And why he was so willing to die
For the country he loved and adored.

"When-a I was just a leetle a-boy,
Back eena Sunny Italy,
I hear my father speek of thing,
That he call-a Liberty.

"In a country that's-a paved with gold,
Where every a-man is a-da same,
And-a I and evra a-boddy,
Has gotta da chance for da fame.



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"



"Wher-a no King and Queen da tel-a you
Joosta what you got-a to do,
I'm a get-a thinkin' to myself,
How grand if dat-sa true."

"So by-un-by I grow up,
Beega strong-a boy, 'bout **seexteen**,
And I come along in a steerage boat,
To the land of which I dream.

"And there I find-a joosta so true,
Evra-ting is a-right;
I'm-a live in-a great-a country,
My own-a boss day and night.

"Evra-a-boddy joosta so free,
Almost-a like da bird,
Joosta work so much-a evra day
No lik-a da sheep are you herd.

"An' den, I meet-a my sweet-a Marie,
So we get-a marry one nic-a day,
And we mak-a nic-a home,
By time, leetla babee cum our way.

"An' evra thing joosta so nice,
I'm a cum along joosta fine,
Until-a da Kaiz, he get so fresh,
Right about deesa time.



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

"Evra thing he want ta take,
An' mak-a do joost what he said,
I'm-a no like data stoff,
I'd much-a rather be dead.

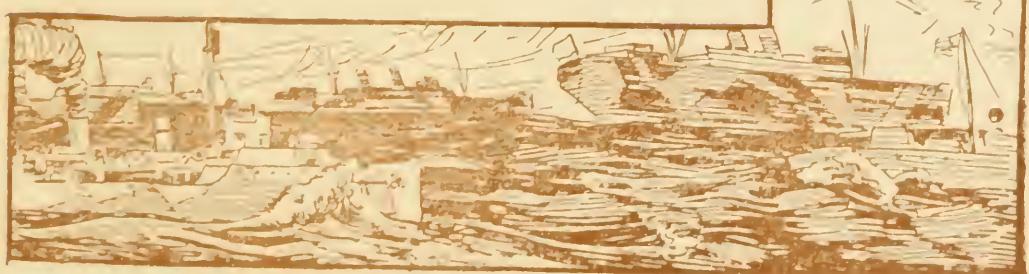
"So I grab-a da gun and cum along,
Joosta like all da rest who're here,
'Cause I'm-a fight for what is right,
And-a my leetl-a home so dear.

"I don't-a mind-a dees now,
'Cause we here all alone,
Evra teeng she cum out all-a right,
An' by-time we soon go home.

"So joosta you lie quiet,
While I look-a 'round a-bit,
But don't-a forget to tell-a Marie,
In case I'm-a mabbe get hit."

He took and shook me by the hand,
And started out alone,
To me it brought an awakening,
And the treasure now I own.

So I'm done with material treasures,
Relics, mines, and things,
And treasure instead the memories,
Of love that sacrifice brings.



Old Detail Army



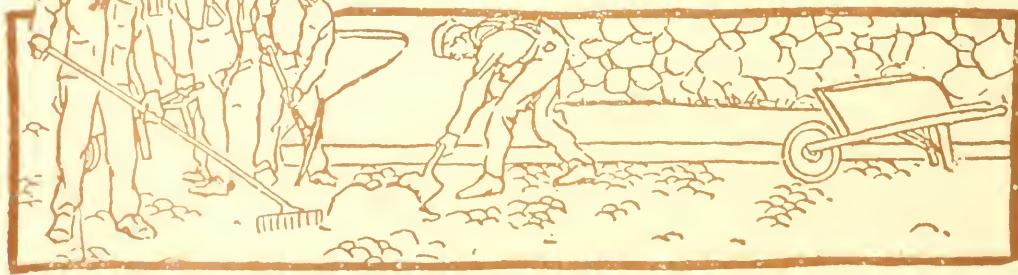
Doggone this Detail Army,
Is all I've got to say,
Ever since the Armistice,
We've been laboring night and day.

When the fighting was all over,
And we thot the job was done,
They handed us a shovel,
And took away our gun.

The French Folks only laughed at us,
(They did it on the sly),
When our bold and noble white-winged squad
Went sadly marching by.

I never thot that I would be,
A street-cleaner brave and bold,
Until I started cleaning up France,
In the sleet, the rain and the cold.

From K. P. to loading box cars,
They worked you night and day,
So doggone this "Old Detail Army,"
Is all I have to say.



Cooties

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

When you're standing at attention,
And the cooties duck below;
Just the way they come for seconds,
Ain't it hell?—Well, I'll say so!

In the lines the boys were diggin'
With their shovels to get in;
While the "cootie" rigged his digger
With his rig for digging in.

At the front the Majors had 'em,
Every Captain raised his share;
But there sure was Hell a-poppin'
When a "Buck" had one to spare.

Now every nation has them,
The great ones and the small;
But for "tame" and "naughty" cooties.
Rainy France, she leads them all.



The Bandolier

Perhaps in the mud you've seen me laying,

Or perhaps in the Q. M. den;
But still and all I'm one of you,
No matter where or when.

I fall a want that is a need,
As across your shoulder I'm slung,
And done my hit as well perhaps,
As some highly touted gun.

Just a bit of woven cloth,
Thrown slightly about,
But when in the midst of a tough hot fight,
Pray tell, for whom did you shout?

I'm the one for whom you cried,
And gladly did I respond,
I knew your hour of need would come,
That's why I was easily found.



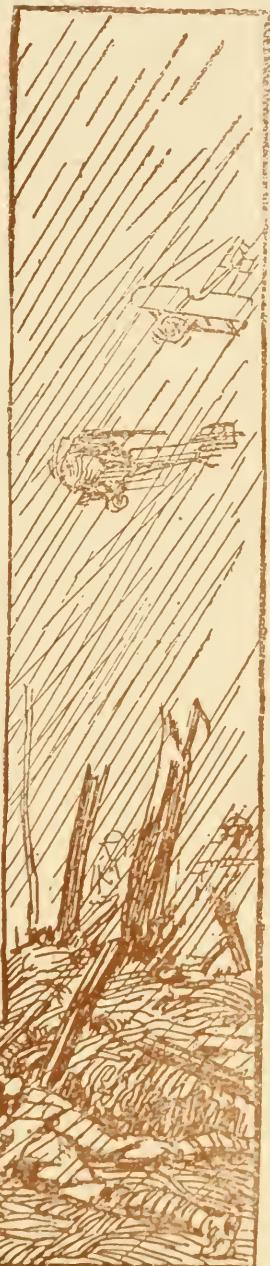
"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

I flung myself around your neck,
When you started in the fight,
Stop a moment and reflect,
You'll see where I was right.

Just a lowly bit of patch cloth,
Humble carrier of the shell,
I served my purpose just as true,
As you who did so well.

So if again some day we meet,
Don't start and cuss and jeer,
Just remember I'm your "right hand bower,"
Your humble bandolier.

The bandolier was used as a carrier of our extra rifle ammunition, and they would hold 120 shells each. When going in the lines we would oftentimes pack from four to six of these slung across our shoulder, and we would heartily tell the world that they were heavy, etc., but it wasn't long before we were more than willing to pack them as we soon learned that in time of need they were our one best bet.



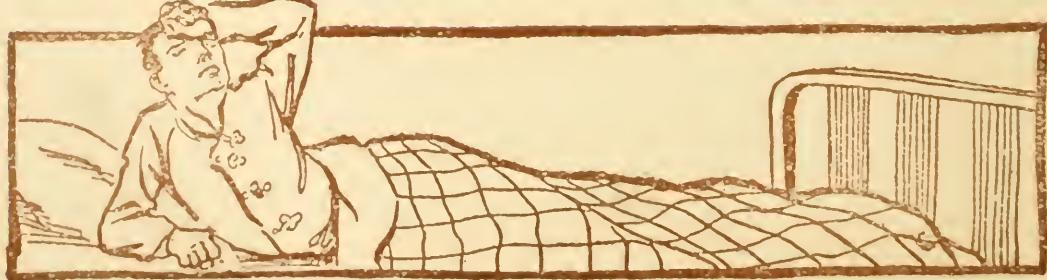
"Thots!"

Oh! to get away from it all,
Those war-ridden thots, that come,
To blind forever those memories,
And the sound of the bullets' hum.

To live once more, as I did before,
In peace and quiet and rest;
To just forget for a little while,
That it took from my life the best.

At night, when all is quiet,
And I'm lying alone in bed,
There comes a vision of battlefields,
The fight, the maimed and the dead.

Will I never forget that hell "Over There,"
And the tales the battlefields tell,
Of the price my "Buddies" paid with "their all."
And the place in which they fell?



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

And there's my two best "Buddies"
I can see them plain as can be,
A layin' "Out There" crumpled heaps,
And seems like they're calling to me.

I can hear the big 'uns screech and scream,
As they go flying o'er my head,
They seem to say, both night and day,
"Remember the dead—the dead."

And sometimes I think, as I sit alone,
Perhaps it might have been best,
If I too, had paid that great price,
And were out there now with the rest.

Oh! those war cursed thots,
That haunt me night and day;
Dear God, be merciful,
And take them forever away.





Our Chaplain

He came and went amongst our midst,
With never a sign of a gun,
His mind unseared or war-crazed,
With thots of taining the Hun.

His mission was one of kindness,
And no matter what his creed,
You'd always find him near us,
Whene'er we were in need.

I've seen him go amongst the maimed,
To bind and dress their wounds,
Then pray o'er loved ones laid to rest,
While shells played shrieking tunes.

When "Going In," to do our spell,
He'd grasp us by the hand,
And tell us in this simple way,
That God *did* understand.

You proved yourselves God's noblemen,
And played the game clear thru;
Where'er your station is today,
My hat is off to you.

To Father Halligan, Chaplain of the 308th Infantry

Buddies

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

From the North, the East, South or West,
When called upon, we sent our best,
And thru that "Melting Pot" o'er there,
Hearts were moulded, souls laid bare.

A simple greeting known as "Buddy,"
Is worthy of a philosopher's study,
No matter whether man or lad,
That's the one greeting we all had.

From as small a thing, as—"Gimme a light,"
To laying down his life in a fight,
There was no color, nor was there creed,
Whenever a "Buddy" was in need.

A man may have been of the Gospel bred,
Or so low, that even his name was dead,
Yet when he grasped a "Buddy's" hand,
There passed a love they alone understand.

Country, color, creed or station,
Were moulded as one, in War's Devastation,
When "Buddies" went on to that unknown goal,
Shoulder to shoulder, soul to soul.





That Hike

Hey, Fellows!—

Remember the time
The Kaiz got wise,
And took to the Rhine?

Well, we were at Raucort,
Waitin' returns,
When on November eleventh
The war adjourns.

So gladly we mounted
Our packs on our back,
With a song in our hearts,
We started back.

Only to be stopped
At Ouches next day,
And sent up to Mouzon,
Which was the other way.

We did five days' "Guard,"
In the cold up there,
We'll never forget our billet,
That gray church in the square.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

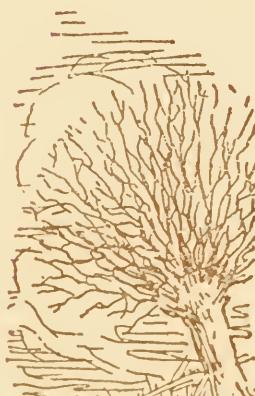
Then came a rush order,
"Roll packs right away,"
As we'd parade in New York
On Christmas day.

So for six days we hiked,
'Till we came to Floren',
I guess you remember—
We were damn near all in.

But we were headed home,
So didn't care a rap,
As we'd been to the Front,
And were used to that.

But when they deloused us,
Oh, boy! How we swore—
For they'd hiked us to Les Isalets,
Which was twelve kilos or more.

Then early and bright
The very next day,
We continued "That Hike,"
"On to Broadway."



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*



Nine more weary days,
We hiked up and down hills,
Until finally we landed
In Pointlaville.

Why grumble now—
You know it's all over,
No doubt you're back home
In the land of clover.

But if ever you think
Things are breaking tough,
Just remember "THAT HIKE"—
"THAT'S ENOUGH."

"THAT HIKE," is a true and accurate description of a forced march made by the entire 77th Division at the close of the war. We covered a distance of about 155 miles on that hike and it took us fifteen days in all. While our kitchens followed us they had practically no food at all, and for Thanksgiving breakfast they handed us out from four to five stewed prunes each, and a hard luck story, and we hiked twelve miles that day in the rain.



"We Are Coming Back"

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

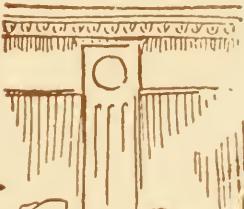
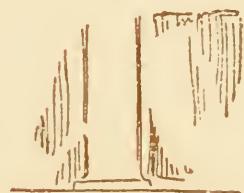
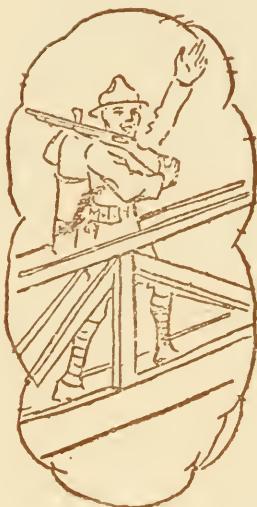
It's the coming back, I hate worst of all,
It grates on my nerves worse than gall,
A wreck, they'll say, when I land today,
And with sighs of pity they'll turn away.

With empty sleeve and face a mess,
I'm no more than half a man, I guess,
And it's tearing my heart slowly apart,
And I wonder how I'll make a new start.

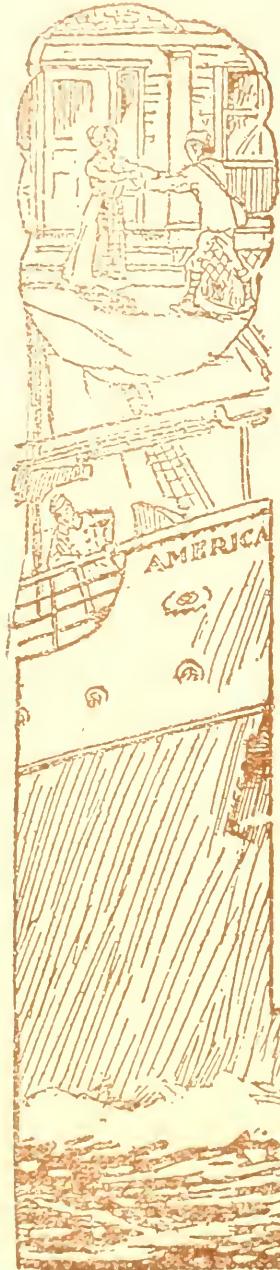
I left these shores not so long ago,
As fit as any man who'd go,
I held my head high as could be,
And was proud to fight for our Liberty.

For it isn't so hard to go in and fight,
When you know your cause is more than right,
And it isn't so hard for men to die,
The hardest of all is to hear folks sigh.

So help me forget, don't sympathize,
I can't get cheery on long drawn sighs,
Just take and shake my one good hand,
Then I'll know *you* understand.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Deughbor"*



"Homeward Bound"

As I stand on this transport here by the rail,
Watching her plow thru the foam;
There's just one thing I can think about,
And that is, we're "Going Home."

Many is the time while at the front,
In some battle of raging hell;
I'd lift my voice to the One above,
That He guide me home safe and well.

All the sweetness and joys of life,
Are embodied in these two words,
"Homeward Bound," my, don't they sound nice;
When your heart's just as light as a bird's?

And I, for one, as I stand here alone,
Thank my Maker above,
That I'm permitted to be "Homeward Bound,"
To the ones I so dearly love.

"Let's Go!"

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

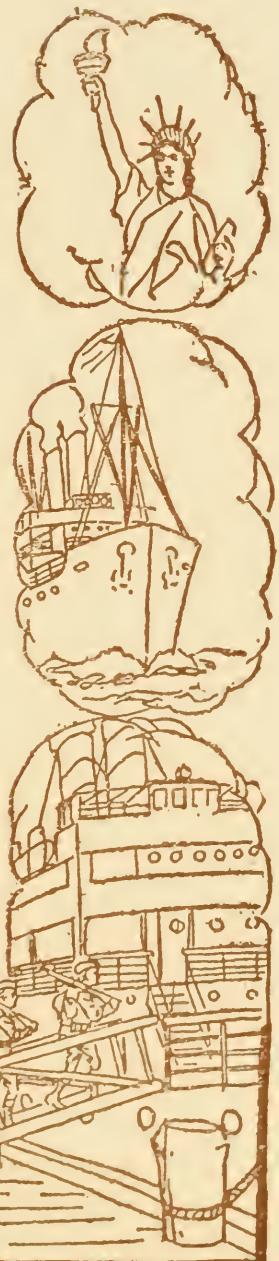
'Twas Uncle Sammy's doughboys
That put the kibosh on the Hun;
Now we're waiting for "That Transport"
And we'll take her on the run.

Oh, why do you wait, Mr. Baker?
Just send us a ship or a raft;
For the U. S. A. and our freedom,
We'd sail on any old craft.

At first we were going home Christmas,
And then on New Year's Day;
But now it's the fifteenth of April,
Unless they change it to May.

Now General Pershing's motto
Is a good one, we all know;
"Let's get where we're going today, boys,"
And you bet, we're ready to go.

The Statue of Liberty beckons
To her soldiers across the sea;
"Let's go!" and get where we're going,
Back home, to the land of the free.



"The Price"



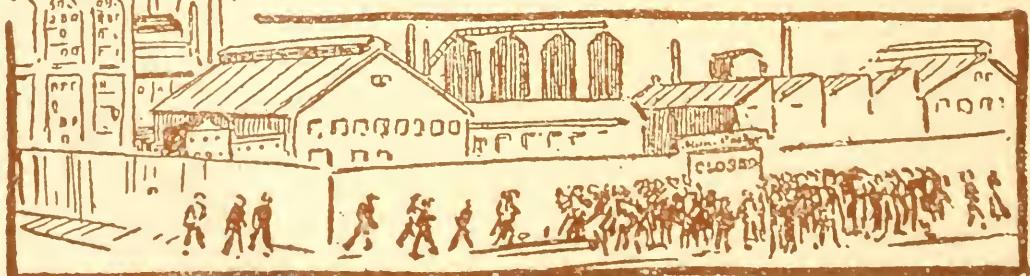
Now listen here, old Pal of mine,
I've fought from the Vesle clear up to the Rhine,
At Chateau-Thierry and in the Argonne Wood,
I did my bit as best I could.

Why, I've cut my way through an ocean of wire,
And stood the test when under fire,
I've lain in the cold and the rain all night,
Fought like hell for what I thot was right.

I've marched to the band and felt mighty proud,
Because I was one of that fighting crowd,
Now I'm back in this land of ours,
And will be in my civies in a few short hours.

But, somehow or other it all seems bare,
And I feel like hell when people stare,
For some are thinking of loved ones lost,
And others of how much we're going to cost.

And that's the bunch I'm sore about,
The patriot who was so willing to shout,
Then turn us out when we came home,
On two months' pay in the world to roam.



"The Returns"

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

Buddy of mine, you're wrong, all wrong,
You'll soon again be one of the throng,
Not as you were when you went away,
But a proved man now, the man of the day.

Why, boy, just think of what you've been thru,
And the glory of knowin' that you've been true,
Think of the "Buddies" whom you gave a hand,
Why, you gained the love of your fellow man.

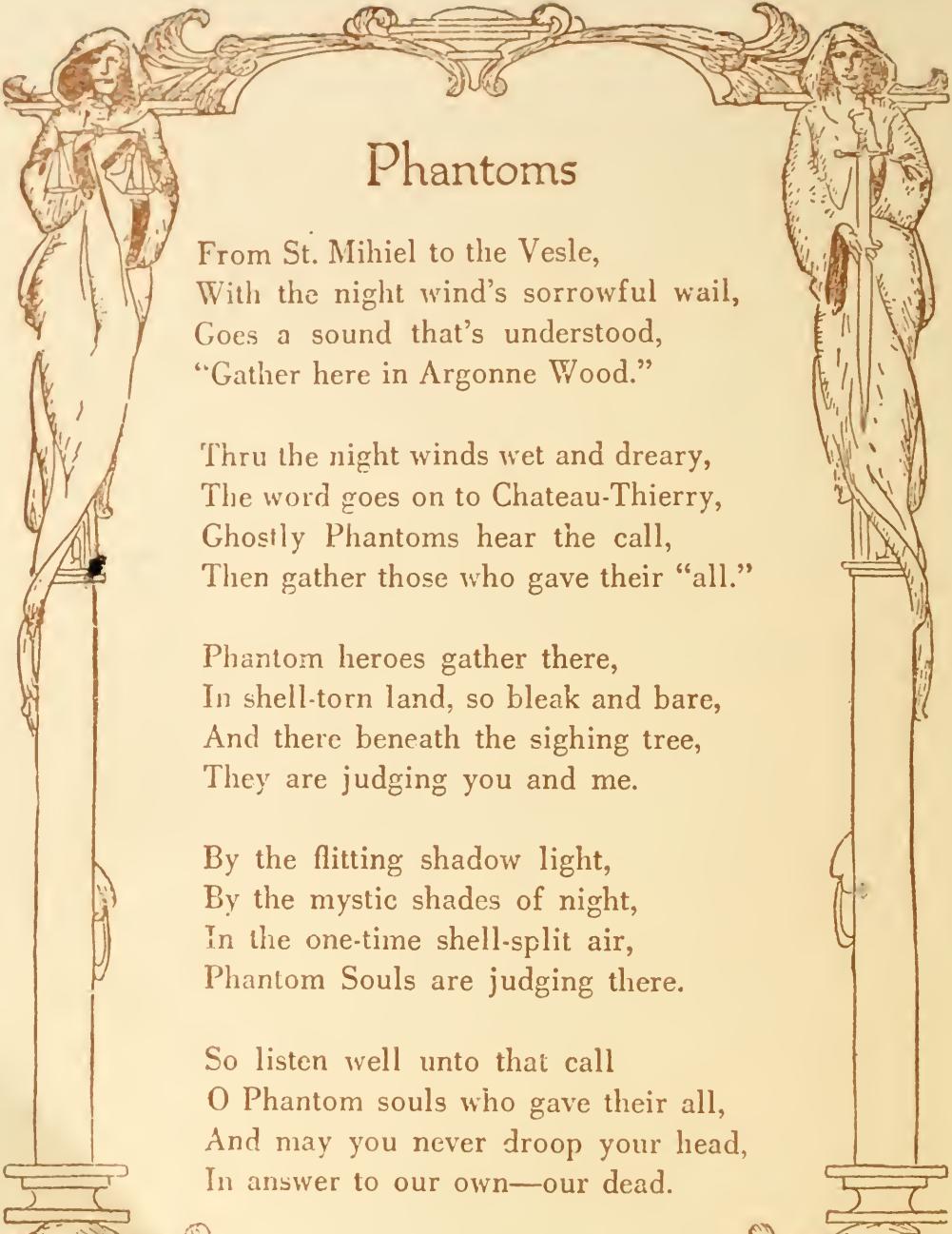
Think of the knowledge you did gain,
When you pushed clear thru to Alsace-Lorraine,
Think for a moment of some homely French
folk,

That you helped release from the Hun's terrible
yoke.

Why, they expressed to you in their attitude,
An ocean of love and real gratitude,
And in one small second of that war,
You've lived a thousand lives or more.

Tho you may not have your share of gold,
What you learned "Up There" is wealth untold;
And the big thing you gained from what you've
been thru;
Is that high ideal of being true.





Phantoms

From St. Mihiel to the Vesle,
With the night wind's sorrowful wail,
Goes a sound that's understood,
"Gather here in Argonne Wood."

Thru the night winds wet and dreary,
The word goes on to Chateau-Thierry,
Ghostly Phantoms hear the call,
Then gather those who gave their "all."

Phantom heroes gather there,
In shell-torn land, so bleak and bare,
And there beneath the sighing tree,
They are judging you and me.

By the flitting shadow light,
By the mystic shades of night,
In the one-time shell-split air,
Phantom Souls are judging there.

So listen well unto that call
O Phantom souls who gave their all,
And may you never droop your head,
In answer to our own—our dead.



